

commander of the 7440th Combat Wing. The General flew combat missions over Iraq in the F4G Phantom II Advanced "Wild Weasel."

In his years in the Air Force, General Peksens has a long history of command. He served as commander of the joint U.S. Air Force/U.S. Army in Europe Warrior Preparation Center, the largest computer war gaming facility in the world. From July 1988 to July 1989, General Peksens commanded the 26th Reconnaissance Wing in Zweibrücken, Germany. Under his command, the wing won the annual world-wide reconnaissance competition. From July 1989 to July 1991, he commanded the 52nd Fighter Wing "Wild Weasels" at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. During this period, the 52nd Fighter Wing deployed early and contributed significant resources to our Nation's combat operations in the Persian Gulf war. From September 1992 to July 1994, General Peksens commanded the 410th Bomb Wing at K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in my district in Northern Michigan. During that period of time, the wing won the U.S. Strategic Command's first Omaha Trophy as the best flying unit in that command.

General Peksens currently serves as the director of Strategy, Policy and Plans for the U.S. Southern Command in Panama. In this capacity, he is responsible for formulating the long range strategy for achieving U.S. military objectives in Latin America.

General Peksens has been recognized repeatedly for his work and valor. His decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star and the Air Medal with nine oak leaf clusters.

I came to know General Peksens when he served at K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base. As the commander of K.I. Sawyer, General Peksens presided over the base at the time that it was announced for closure by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Understandably, this was a painful, difficult time for the residents of the Marquette area. Through these rough times, General Peksens was always there for the community, to give his advice, time and assistance. To this day, people in Marquette still speak of his commitment and caring for the area and its residents. The General's devotion and hard work earned him the respect and genuine affection of virtually every person in the Marquette/Gwinn area. He was at all times, a caring and competent professional who personally and professionally reflected the highest standards and the greatest credit on him and the U.S. Air Force.

Mr. Speaker, General Peksens is retiring this year after nearly 30 years of distinguished service to this Nation. Serving in our Nation's Armed Forces is not an easy vocation. It is difficult, dangerous work where one can be called upon to work in an office one day, and to risk your life in combat the next. The tremendous sacrifices of these military officers and their families are inspiring. In peace and war, General Peksens has given of himself for the benefit of this country. I am proud to know him, to call him a friend, to say that this Nation owes him a debt of gratitude.

While we northern Michiganders will miss General Peksens, we want to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude for a job well done and wish him and his wife, Ruthi, well in all of their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO LAKEVIS COLEMAN: A TRUE HERO

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my personal congratulations and the thanks of our community to Lakevis Coleman of Miami, a young man who is a true American hero.

In November 1993, Lakevis Coleman heard someone crying and went to investigate. He saw that a 5-year-old girl had been assaulted and sprang into action, grabbed her attacker, held him until the Metro-Dade police arrived and then testified against him in court. Because of his efforts, a child molester was convicted of kidnapping and sexual battery and sentenced to life in prison.

Our community is safer today because Mr. Coleman—only 19 years of age—cared enough and had the presence of mind to help a defenseless child who was totally incapable of helping herself. By doing so, Mr. Coleman reaffirmed what is best in our community, and I know that my colleagues join me in recognizing his extremely important contribution.

I want to share with my colleagues an article on Lakevis Coleman that appeared in the Miami Herald.

HERO HELPS DELIVER JUSTICE

(By Manny Garcia)

Lakevis Coleman helped send a rapist to prison this week. He is not a police officer or a prosecutor, just a South Dade resident who saw a child being assaulted, grabbed her attacker, held him for police and then testified against him.

"A real hero," said Windy Johnston, chief of the Dade state attorney's office Sexual Battery Unit.

Coleman was the only eyewitness who could identify James Thomas as the man who raped the child in a wooded area, after luring her there with offers of candy. The 5-year-old girl, an elementary school student from Goulds, testified in court but could not identify Thomas, even though he sat 20 feet away.

Without Coleman, "it would have been hard to win," said Johnston, who prosecuted the case with David Shapiro.

Coleman, 19, downplayed his role.

"It could have been my little sister or cousin," he said. "If someone sees a crime, they should get involved and offer a helping hand."

It doesn't always happen that way. Just down the block from where the rape occurred, a Naples contractor was shot and paralyzed during a robbery in broad daylight. Only one person initially came forward to testify in that case, but she later backed down. The case remains in limbo.

"You have to get involved," Coleman said. "It's the only way to protect your community."

Coleman, who waxes cars for a living, helped his community at about 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 19, 1993.

"I was laying on the sofa watching TV," Coleman said. "I had a friend over and she heard someone crying. I didn't pay any attention."

But the crying did not stop, so Coleman stood up and walked outside. He saw the victim's 7-year-old sister running from the bushes, pointing at the ground and scream-

ing for help. Coleman saw Thomas trying to pull up his pants.

"What are you doing?" Coleman yelled, fast-walking toward Thomas.

"Nothing," Thomas responded.

A few feet later, Coleman arrived: "I saw the little girl. She didn't have anything on but a top."

"I looked at him. He looked at me. He tried to run. I grabbed him and threw him on the ground."

"I didn't do anything," Thomas insisted.

"Then why is she crying?" asked Coleman. Coleman told his friend to dial 911.

By then, word of the attack had spread around the neighborhood and an angry crowd surrounded Thomas. They wanted a piece of him before police arrived.

"They wanted to hurt him. I wanted to do it myself," said Coleman, who shielded Thomas from the crowd, urging them to let justice take its course.

Metro-Dade officers arrived two minutes later and hauled Thomas away. Paramedics took the girl to Jackson Memorial Hospital's Rape Treatment Center.

"He cut me. He cut me," she told doctors. Her injuries required surgery.

On Thursday, Coleman told his story to a four-woman, two-man jury. On Friday, the jury ordered lunch and, between bites of their sandwiches, convicted Thomas, 26, of kidnapping and sexual battery on a child under 12. Circuit Judge Fredericks Smith sentenced him to life in prison.

"He got what he deserved," said Coleman, who hopes to one day become a Dade County corrections officer. "I wasn't going to let him get away."

REMEMBERING A HERO—MAJ. GEN. GLENN A. PROFITT II

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, the people of Kentucky and the Nation lost a war hero and humble servant when Air Force Maj. Gen. Glenn A. Profitt II died tragically in a plane crash in Alabama on April 17.

A native of Corbin, KY, General Profitt was director of plans and operations for the Air Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX.

Profitt was in charge of jet pilot training, survival training and combat training for airlift, fighter, tanker and special operations crews.

During his 31 years of service in the Air Force, he served in Vietnam and Desert Storm receiving numerous awards and decorations, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross with six oak leaf clusters, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with 29 oak leaf clusters and a bronze service star, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Combat Readiness Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal.

In Southeast Asia, General Profitt flew nearly 500 combat missions, serving almost 4 years in the region.

And, in Desert Storm, General Profitt was commander of the 15th Air Division, where he is credited with designing and implementing the most destructive air strike in history. Shortly after his successful tour in Desert Storm, he was promoted to Major General in 1992.

The general was commissioned through the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Purdue University in 1964. He also received a masters degree from Webster University in Missouri and degrees from the Armed Forces Staff College and the pres-

tigious National War College in Washington, DC.

General Profit's father, Glenn Profit, served as the city manager of Corbin in the 1970's and many of his relatives still live in our area.

I am proud of Maj. Gen. Glenn A. Profit II. He placed his life in harm's way to protect and

defend his country. Then, he led a new generation into battle nearly two decades later. He gave his career to the United States Air Force, and his service must always be remembered.